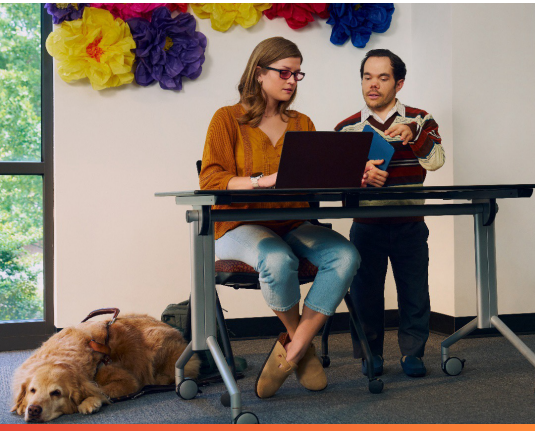




Reasonable accommodations help qualified employees with disabilities participate fully in the workplace.

Photo credit: Justin Kaneps and the All In Frame Stock Library

More than half the workplace accommodations reported to the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) cost employers nothing to implement.¹

"Reasonable accommodation is any change to the application or hiring process, to the job, to the way the job is done...that allows a person with a disability who is qualified for the job to perform the essential functions of that job and enjoy equal employment opportunities."

—Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

¹ Source: Job Accommodation Network, *Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact*.

Reasonable Accommodations in the Workplace

Reasonable accommodations are changes to the work environment or the way work is usually done that enable a person with a disability to apply for a job, perform the essential functions of a job, or have equal access to workplace benefits and opportunities.

What is the accommodation process?

When an applicant or employee communicates that a change at work is needed because of a medical condition or disability, the employer should engage in an **interactive process** with the employee to identify an effective accommodation:

- Focus on the employee's workplace limitations and accommodation needs.
- Discuss possible accommodation options with the employee.
- Request medical documentation only if the disability or need for accommodation is not obvious and documentation is permitted.
- Consider more than one option when appropriate.
- Keep disability-related medical information confidential.
- Follow up to determine if the accommodation is effective.

The employer does not have to provide the employee's preferred accommodation if another effective accommodation is available.

When can an accommodation be denied?

An employer may deny an accommodation that would create an **undue hardship**, meaning significant difficulty or expense in relation to factors such as the employer's size, resources, and operations. Before denying a request, employers should consider if another accommodation would meet the employee's needs without creating an undue hardship.

Recommended resources:

- [Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)
- [Small Business at Work Toolkit from the Northeast ADA Center, Tool 7](#)